

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Artesian Letcher School District  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2001-2002**

**Team Members:** Mary Borgman and Barb Boltjes, Education Specialist

**Dates of On Site Visit:** September 19, 2002

**Date of Report:** September 26, 2002

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Office of Special Education. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Maintenance</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Out of Compliance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Student files
- Budget information

- Student progress data
- Student handbook
- Civility policy
- Notices printed in handbook and newspaper
- Parent handbook

### **Maintenance**

The steering committee determined that district has in place policies and procedures for providing training for all staff. The district has developed a civility policy for all students. Staff training has been completed in the area of assertive discipline and reading.

### **Needs Improvement**

The steering committee determined that paraprofessional training needs to be made a consistent part of the inservice routine. Paraprofessionals need to be trained in the area of disability of the students with which they will be working.

## **Validation Results**

### **Maintenance**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of maintenance for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

### **Needs Improvement**

The monitoring team agrees that paraprofessional training needs to be made a consistent part of the fall routine. Paraprofessionals need to be trained in the area of disability of the students with which they will be working.

### **Out of Compliance**

#### **24:05:24:01. Referral**

Referral includes any written request, which brings a student to the attention of a school district administrator as a student who may be in need of special education. A referral made by a parent may be submitted verbally but a district administrator must document it. Other referral sources include screening, classroom teacher, other district personnel, public or private agencies and private schools.

File reviews and interviews with district staff suggested a potential problem with the district's referral process. A written referral is not consistently completed upon receipt of a verbal referral from a parent or district personnel. Therefore, some files did not include referral information.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child

reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Budget information
- State data
- Budget information
- District record of release to outside agencies

#### **Maintenance**

The steering committee determined special education services provided to all children who are determined eligible for special education and related services as an area of maintenance. The steering committee also indicated that no student was suspended/expelled for 10 or more days.

#### **Needs Improvement**

The steering committee indicated that IEPs for students with behavior issues need to be correlated with the district civility policy and such must be published in the district parent/student handbook.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Maintenance**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of maintenance for free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee.

#### **Needs Improvement**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of needs improvement for free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee.

### **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Student File reviews

## **Maintenance**

The steering committee noted that comprehensive evaluations are conducted by a qualified team, which utilizes valid and reliable assessments. The steering committee noted assessments are reviewed to determine eligibility and if applicable, plan for services.

## **Needs Improvement**

The steering committee noted that students need to be assessed with more than one assessment to further validate results. It is also noted that functional assessments need to be incorporated in order to develop present levels of performance and goals and objectives.

## **Validation Results**

### **Maintenance**

The monitoring team agrees with all maintenance identified under appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee. Additional information regarding evaluating in all areas of suspected disability is provided under areas “out of compliance”.

### **Needs Improvement**

The monitoring team agrees with the areas in need of improvement as identified under appropriate evaluation.

### **Out of Compliance**

#### Issues requiring immediate attention

24:0525:04. Evaluation procedures

24:0525:04:02. Determination of needed evaluation data.

The review team did not find assessments in the area of secondary transition for students of transition age. File reviews and staff interviews found that transition assessments were not included as part of the initial evaluation or reevaluation process for students age 14 and older. Functional assessment information is available through a variety of sources in the district, however, there is not an established process across all grade levels and disciplines for collecting, analyzing, summarizing or integrating the information into the 25 day evaluation process for all eligible students.

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Specific district policy
- Student files

### **Maintenance**

The steering committee determined that the parental rights booklet contains all required content and based on file reviews, consent is obtained for all necessary purposes and appropriate written notice is given to parents prior to any meetings.

### **Out of Compliance**

The steering committee noted that procedures need to be put in place to ensure that upon the 17<sup>th</sup> birthday, the student's team will meet to discuss transfer of rights. Procedures also need to be established for addressing graduation requirements one year prior to graduation and for completion of transition assessments.

## **Validation Results**

### **Maintenance**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of maintenance identified under procedural safeguards.

### **Out of Compliance**

24:05:30:16.01 Transfer of parental rights

24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program.

The student and their parents must be informed of the transfer of parental rights one year prior to the student turning 18. In a review of student record, there was no indication the student or parents were informed of the transfer of rights one year prior to the student turning age 18. In student files reviewed graduation requirements were not addressed one year prior to the graduation date. Through a review of files for students age 14 and older, the monitoring team noted that transition assessment was not included on the prior notice and consequently was not used to develop a transition plan.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- File reviews
- Comprehensive plan

- Budget
- State data

### **Maintenance**

The steering committee concluded that the district provides an IEP for each eligible student.

### **Needs Improvement**

The steering committee indicated a need to develop a form stating district staff have discussed language barriers with parents at the Colony and parents are content with receiving information in English, as theirs is no written form of Hutterish.

## **Validation Results**

### **Maintenance**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of maintenance as concluded by the steering committee.

### **Needs Improvement**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of maintenance as concluded by the steering committee.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions; consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used

- Comprehensive plan
- Budget

### **Maintenance**

The steering committee noted that the district follows the mandates for least restrictive environment. Documentation is provided and the teacher justifies the continuum of least restrictive environment alternatives. Appropriate grade level instructional materials are provided to each child based on the general education curriculum.

## **Validation Results**

### **Maintenance**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas of maintenance for least restrictive environment as concluded by the steering committee.